

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
MAG BUILDING CODES COMMITTEE

October 21, 1998
Maricopa Association of Governments Office
Saguaro Room
Phoenix, Arizona

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Leon Manuel, El Mirage, Chairman
Ken Sowers, Avondale
Mike Brown, Cave Creek
Alex Banachowski, Chandler
Patrick Davis, Fountain Hills
Ralph Vasquez, Gila Bend
JoRene DeVeau, Gila River Indian Community
Ray Patten, Gilbert
Larry Richards, Glendale
Steve Burger, Goodyear
Richard Hughes, Litchfield Park

Fred King, Maricopa County
Tom Mattingly, Mesa
Jerry Loruss, Peoria
Bob Goodhue, Phoenix
Adam Sessions, Queen Creek
Dave Potter for Anthony Floyd, Scottsdale
Forrest Fielder, Surprise
Michael Williams, Tempe

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Maria Herriage, Tolleson

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Skip Blunt, Wickenburg
Red Miller, Youngtown

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Tom Simplot, Arizona Homebuilders
Association

*Those members not present.

OTHERS PRESENT

Phil Pettice, Registrar of Contractors
Bernie Gallenberg, Southwest Gas
Harry Wolfe, MAG

T. J Parent, Arizona Awning and Patio
Enclosure Association
Roger Vermillion, Tempe
Keith Fohrenkam, Gila River Indian Community

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Chairman Leon Manuel.

2. Approval of May 20, 1998 Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Ray Patten, seconded by Tom Mattingly and unanimously recommended to approve the meeting minutes of May 20, 1998.

3. Call to the Public

There were no requests to address the MAG Building Codes Committee on non-agenda issues.

Leon Manuel provided an update on issues for members of the MAG Building Codes Committee. He reported that on Wednesday, November 4, 1998, a Department of Energy Teleconference would be held. Mr. Manuel also noted that Larry Richards and Alan Olsen were completing their terms on the ICBO Board of Directors and commended them for their contributions and representation of the Phoenix metropolitan area and the State of Arizona. Mr. Dave Mann, Building Official for the City of Tucson, will now serve one of the two vacated Director positions.

Mr. Manuel also noted that he had been elected as Chair of the ICBO Occupancy Committee and that the following Arizona building staff members will serve on ICBO Committees:

Steve Burger, Goodyear - Education
Derek Horn, Phoenix- IBC General Technical Subcommittee
Dave Fizzell, Prescott - Means of Egress
Bill Jones, Pima County - Means of Egress
Tom Hedges, Mesa - Fire Safety

It was noted that the fireplace standard adopted by MAG was scheduled to take effect on December 31, 1998. The lag period between the establishment of the standard in October 1997 and its enforcement was intended to enable suppliers to deplete their inventory of existing fireplaces.

Dave Potter said that Scottsdale adopted the fireplace standard and has been telling people that they cannot install a fireplace unless it meets the new requirements.

Bob Goodhue said that Phoenix is addressing the fireplace standard as of the date of the issuance of the building permit. As of January 1, 1999, they will cease issuing building permits that allow for fireplaces unless they meet the new standard. Tom Mattingly said that Mesa was also going to regulate the installation by the date on the building permit.

Larry Richards said that Glendale is enforcing the standards in a manner similar to Scottsdale. They are enforcing the standard so that after January 1, 1999 fireplaces must be in compliance with the standards.

Mike Williams said that Tempe is regulating the installation of fireplaces. He said that just because someone has a permit to undertake construction does not authorize installation of a fireplace.

Steve Burger said that Goodyear was regulating based on the date of installation of the fireplace.

Patrick Davis asked how people would determine when the fireplace was installed. Would they use the construction date, or the date that the construction was inspected? Steve Burger responded that Goodyear was using the inspection date.

Steve Burger said that Ken Sowers wanted input from members of the MAG Building Codes Committee on standards for protecting hot water heaters in garages. Mr. Burger said that in Goodyear a 4-inch curb is used. Other standards reported were as follows:

El Mirage - wheel stops and direction of travel
Tempe - wheel stops

Glendale - wheel stops
Gilbert - wheel stops and columns
Fountain Hills - 4 inch curb
Mesa - 4 inch curb if garage has two foot return or bollard
Chandler - wheel stops
Maricopa County - wheel stops
Phoenix - wheel stops
Surprise - wheel stops
Queen Creek - wheel stops
Scottsdale - wheel stops
Gila River Indian Community - wheel stops
Youngtown - wheel stops
Peoria - wheel stops

Tom Mattingly reported that House Bill 2663 requires both gas and electric outlets for major appliances be available as of August 29, 1998. He added that current owners will have the option of using gas or electric. Mr. Mattingly expressed concern about addressing combustion air requirements for appliances that need it and are not installed.

Red Miller asked if gas includes propane. Tom Mattingly responded that the legislation simply refers to gas.

Bob Goodhue asked whether the legislation defines availability. It was suggested that a representative of Southwest Gas address that at the next meeting.

Pat Davis asked if local jurisdictions are responsible for providing piping to the residence if no natural gas is available.

Leon Manuel noted that the video of the MAG Desert Peaks Award ceremony in which the Chairperson of the MAG Regional Council commended the work of the Building Codes Committee would be deferred to the next meeting.

4. Revision to Southwest Gas Policy and Procedures Regarding Utility Clearances

It was noted that Southwest Gas had proposed that local jurisdictions consider revising how clearances are provided. Mr. Bernie Gallenberg said that Southwest Gas had sent out a letter to change the way clearances are requested. He commented that the current process which involves calling the local jurisdiction for the clearance often involves extensive communications and interferes with serving the customer in a timely manner. He proposed that a green tag be placed on the piping to indicate if installation is approved. If not, they send them back to the City.

Mike Williams expressed concern that a green tag could be falsified and illegal construction could take place.

Larry Richards said that Glendale postpones utility clearances for subdivisions until other site development issues have been approved. He was concerned that a green tag would allow construction to take place without authorization.

Tom Mattingly said that the City of Mesa prefers to call in the clearance to Southwest Gas.

Adam Sessions said that Queen Creek would rather fax the clearance rather than rely on a green tag.

Pat Davis said that his inspectors call in the clearance from the field. He noted, however, the Southwest Gas telephone system does not allow for direct access to the clearance desk. He suggested that a separate phone number be established for calling in clearances as a way of expediting the process.

Bernie Gallenberg noted that it typically takes from 24-48 hours from the time gas service is requested to initiate the service. He added that for \$25, Southwest Gas can expedite the installation so that it takes place within 24 hours.

Chairman Manuel asked of the possibility of an e-mail address be set up for clearances.

Bernie Gallenberg said that Southwest Gas wanted to work with the local jurisdictions to streamline the process for starting service. He said that he would pursue some of the suggestions raised at the meeting and would report back to the committee.

5. Emergency Escape Through Window Screens

Larry Richards reported that window screens were screwed in which upset their council members. It was questioned whether this complied with the Uniform Building Code. He asked whether other cities allow this.

Representatives from the cities of El Mirage, Tempe, Gilbert, Mesa and Chandler said that having window screens screwed in was not a problem.

6. Update of the Permit Technicians Group

Steve Burger provided an update of the committee's activities and indicated that they had been meeting in different locations. It was noted that the technicians thought that visiting other jurisdictions would provide insight into how other cities operate and begin establishing a network that can be used to share work experiences and to solve problems that are similar in each jurisdiction.

7. One-Hour Fire-Resistive Occupancy Separation

In the interest of time, this topic was postponed to the next meeting.

8. State Plumbing Code Commission

It was noted that the plumbers union developed an economic impact report. Larry Richards suggested that members of the Building Codes Committee go to GERK in November to see how they operate in preparation for the December meeting of the State Plumbing Code Commission.

9. MAG Building Codes

Leon Manuel reported that elected officials had recently expressed concern to the Executive Director of MAG about local jurisdictions using different codes.

It was suggested that the MAG Building Codes Committee adopt a policy that would lead to local

jurisdictions using one building code, perhaps the ICBO Code scheduled for April 2000. It was noted that the objective would be to achieve agreement such was done on the MAG's One Coat Stucco Compliance Program or the Approved Truss Manufacturer Program.

Bob Goodhue said that he came to Phoenix from a state that had a state building code. He said that amending that code was difficult. Mr. Goodhue noted that local building codes are not consistent. He said that Phoenix is limited by the process the city is required to follow and the timeliness of that process.

It was suggested that a resolution be prepared for jurisdictions to ratify that would establish a process for achieving uniformity among building codes and to hold a public meeting to have input on the process. He said that Phoenix would support uniformity.

Steve Burger said he agreed with Bob Goodhue and that more state codes will be imposed if uniformity is not achieved. He said that people do not object to uniformity, and it would be desirable to have everyone on a level playing field.

Adam Sessions said it would be a good move to endorse uniformity as a group.

Forrest Fielder pointed out that elected officials view building codes officials as their staff.

Tom Mattingly said he wanted to know what Code local jurisdictions had adopted. It was noted that the following codes were currently being used by local jurisdictions.

1991 Uniform Building Code - El Mirage

1994 Uniform Building Code - Phoenix, Tempe, Peoria, Maricopa County, Mesa, Gilbert, Queen Creek, Gila River Indian Community, Goodyear and Litchfield Park.

1997 Uniform Building Code - Surprise, Glendale, Scottsdale

It was reported that Goodyear, Peoria, Phoenix and Maricopa County would use the 1997 UBC as of January 1, 1999.

Larry Richards said that there was merit to adopting a code as a group and determining one set of amendments.

Adam Sessions recommended following the example set by the San Jose, CA area which formed a committee with the purpose of unifying to adopt one UBC edition.

Steve Burger indicated that if Pima County can reach agreement on uniformity then Maricopa County could also reach agreement.

Dave Potter said that in the past building officials had been behind the power curve. He said that the IBC should be examined right away. He added that it is a consensus document of 3 code agencies and that we might want to adopt amendments to it.

It was suggested that a committee could be established to look at the IBC.

Mike Williams asked what the Building Codes Committee was trying to accomplish. He said that taking small steps were not good. It would be better if all the local jurisdictions agree to adopt a specific code.

Mike Williams noted that Tempe adopted the NEC as approved by MAG.

It was suggested that the MAG Building Codes Committee is criticized because of the lack of uniformity. Members of the MAG Building Codes committee have maintained their individuality, but now need to move toward uniformity or the state will impose uniformity.

Bob Goodhue said that perhaps a resolution should be passed agreeing to use the 1997 UBC and the same set of amendments. He noted that San Jose California has 29 jurisdictions and that they agreed to use the same code. In that case a series of public meetings were held to address each code and an advisory board was established.

10. Building Codes Stakeholders Meeting

Harry Wolfe mentioned that MAG was examining each of its committees and considering ways to increase input. He continued that there is an interest in obtaining more input from the private sector, elected officials and members of the public.

11. Legislative Issues

There were no items for discussion.

12. Topics for Future Agendas

Topics for future agendas include House Bill 1226 Electric Deregulation.

13. Marking of Trusses

Mike Williams pointed out that 2343.6 requires the marking of trusses. He said that Pam Wertz of Glendale takes care of the truss list and questioned the marking of trusses with paper tags.

Mr. Marvin Phelps of Phelps and Sons a truss manufacturer said that he wanted the truss stamped on the edge of the board. He said that tags are durable and weather proof, and saves calls to his office.

Mike Williams said that he did not realize that the tag was plastic and durable. He asked if all identification marks were located on the tag.

Dave Potter suggested putting the project number and the truss identification number on the tag. Pat Davis added that Fountain Hills requires a truss layout page.

It was noted that there were two issues regarding the marking of trusses: the use of a paper tag for marking the truss, and the information per UBC 2343.6 to be contained on trusses.

Fred King said there were other materials where stamps could be accepted.

Larry Richards moved that the MAG Building Codes Committee approves the plastic tag identified today for use in marking trusses and set up a committee to address future marking of tags. The motion was seconded by Pat Davis and passed. It was noted that the Wood Truss Council of America makes tags available.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.